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MEDIA RELEASE

City of Medicine Hat - 580 First Street S.E. - Medicine Hat, Alberta, T1A 8E8 - (403) 529-8071

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CITY CELEBRATES FINLAY BRIDGE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Rededication Ceremony Reenacts Original Bridge Crossing

Medicine Hat – The City of Medicine Hat invites the public to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Finlay Bridge on May 14, 2008.

Officially opened on May 14, 1908 by Premier Alexander Rutherford, the 2008 anniversary celebrations include a Rededication Ceremony, unveiling of a commemorative marker, a historical exhibit and video presentation, walking tours, commemorative ribbons and refreshments/cake.

The Rededication Ceremony starts at 3:30 p.m. at the south entrance of Finlay Bridge on Sixth Avenue SE. On hand to celebrate the event will be Len Mitzel, MLA for Cypress–Medicine Hat, Mayor Norm Boucher, Commissioner of Development and Infrastructure, John Komanchuk, Police Chief Gordon Earl and Fire Chief Ron Robinson. A commemorative marker will be unveiled by Mayor Boucher at the bridge entrance.

"Finlay Bridge originally opened in 1908 by driving the first car across the bridge, so we are going to recreate that event by bringing our attending dignitaries across the bridge in vintage cars at the start of the ceremony," says Alderman, Jeremy Thompson, Alderman Responsible for Civic Functions and master of ceremonies for the celebrations.

Finlay Bridge is named in honour of William T. Finlay, a Medicine Hat resident and Mayor of the city from 1900 to 1902. Finlay went on to become Alberta's first Minister of Agriculture.

Following the Rededication Ceremony, residents are invited to the Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre to view a Historical Exhibit of Finlay Bridge in the Foyer Gallery. The exhibit includes information on the construction and its ties to the rest of Alberta as the original Trans-Canada Highway route.

Refreshments and anniversary cake will be served on the Esplanade Terrace.

Other Finlay Bridge 100th Anniversary celebration activities include historical walking tours from the Esplanade to Finlay Bridge from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Interpreters will share the history of the downtown and how Finlay Bridge was instrumental in Medicine Hat's development.

"There is something for everyone. It's an opportunity for residents to celebrate one of our oldest monuments and learn about its history, so I encourage everyone to come out," says Thompson.

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A commemorative Finlay Bridge booklet, created by the Medicine Hat News, will be distributed to residents on May 7. The keepsake booklet includes items from the Esplanade Archives, editorial articles from the News and the official May 14 Finlay Bridge event guide.

Residents can also get more information about the Finlay Bridge celebrations by visiting the City's website at www.medicinehat.ca

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